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Moran et al.

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(54) **SPEED TRACKER**

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(60) Provisional application No. 62/395,887, filed on Sep. 16, 2016.

(51) **Int. Cl.**
A63B 69/32 (2006.01)
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A63B 69/20 (2006.01)
G01L 5/00 (2006.01)
A63B 71/06 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC **A63B 69/32** (2013.01); **A63B 24/0062** (2013.01); **A63B 69/201** (2013.01); **A63B 71/0622** (2013.01); **G01L 5/0052** (2013.01); **A63B 2220/30** (2013.01); **A63B 2220/53** (2013.01); **A63B 2220/64** (2013.01); **A63B 2225/50** (2013.01)

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CPC ... A63B 69/32; A63B 24/0062; A63B 69/201; A63B 71/0622; A63B 2220/53; A63B 2225/50; A63B 2220/30; A63B 2220/64; G01L 5/0052

See application file for complete search history.

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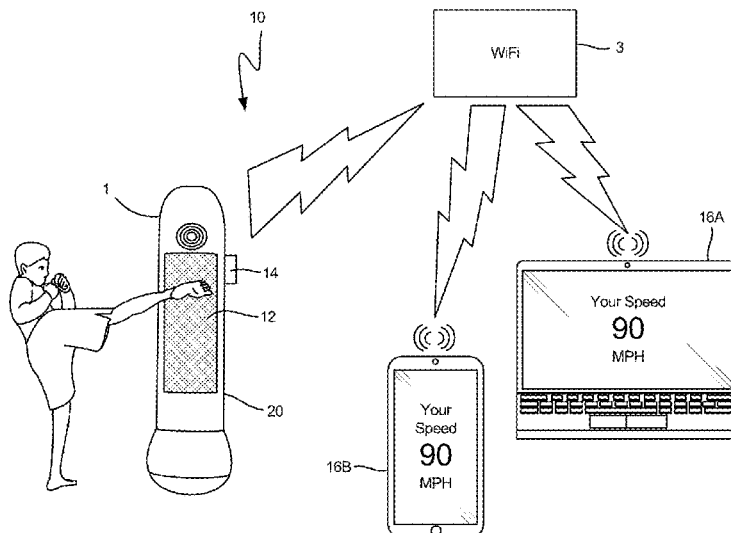
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

The present invention is a device for measuring and displaying the speed, force, rate and/or frequency that an object or a body part strikes a target. The present invention includes an impact sensor, transmitter, computer and display. The sensor includes layers of alternating conductive and non-conductive material that are wrapped around the target. The conductive layers of fabric generate electrical impulses when they come into contact with each other through perforations in the non-conductive material. These signals are interpreted by the computer to derive information about the speed of the strike against the target.

11 Claims, 10 Drawing Sheets



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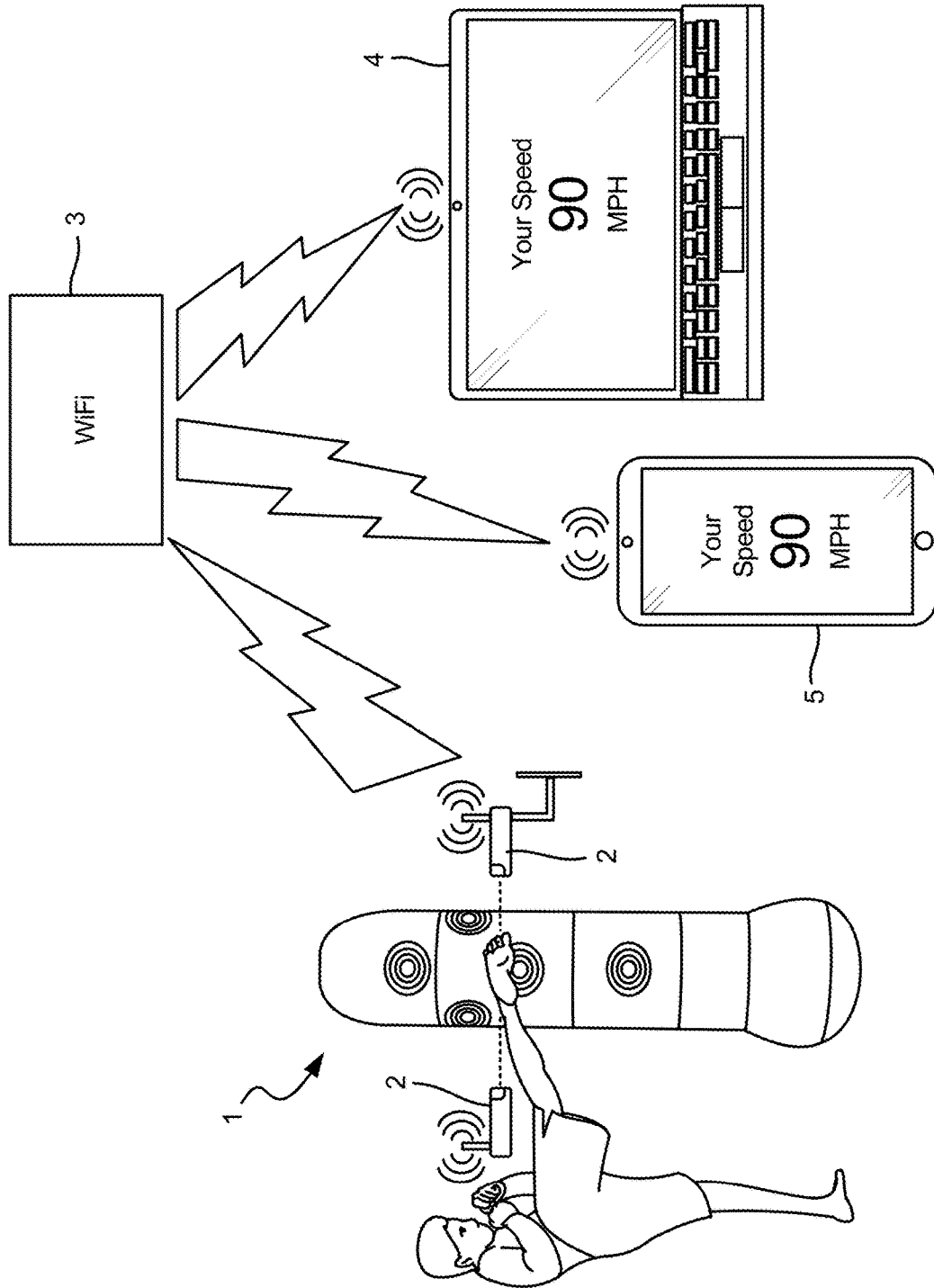


FIG. 1
(Prior Art)

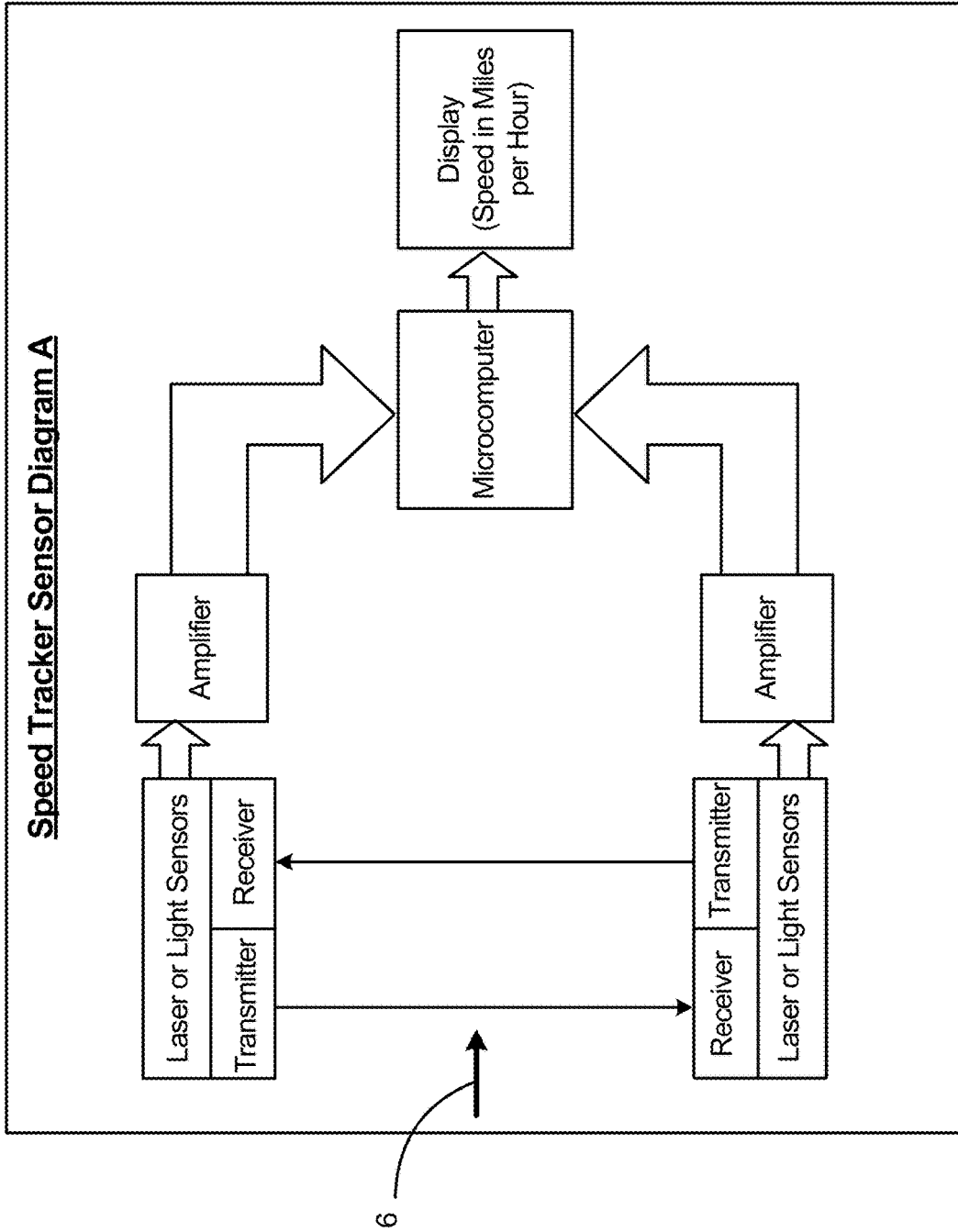


FIG. 2
(Prior Art)

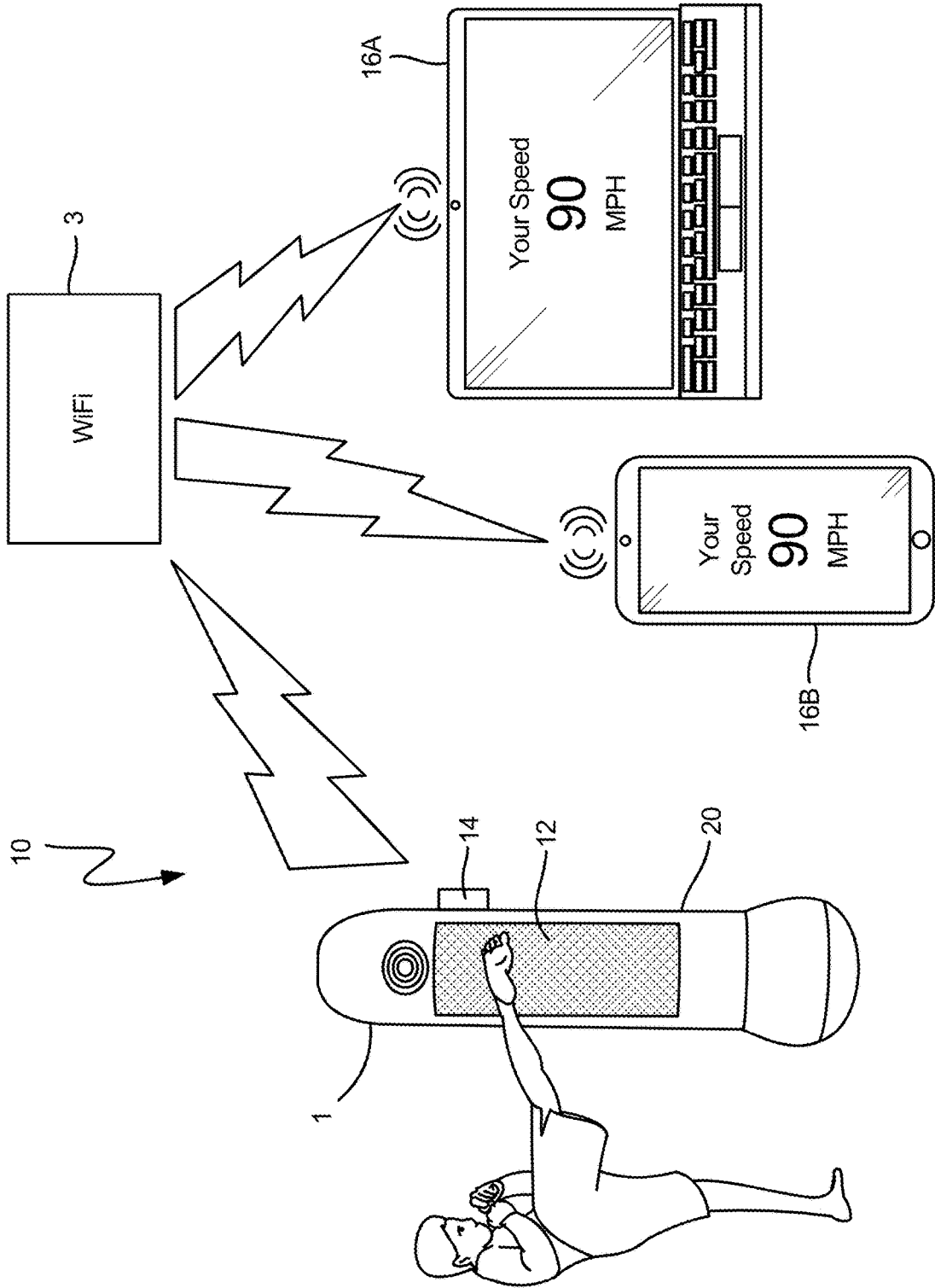


FIG. 3

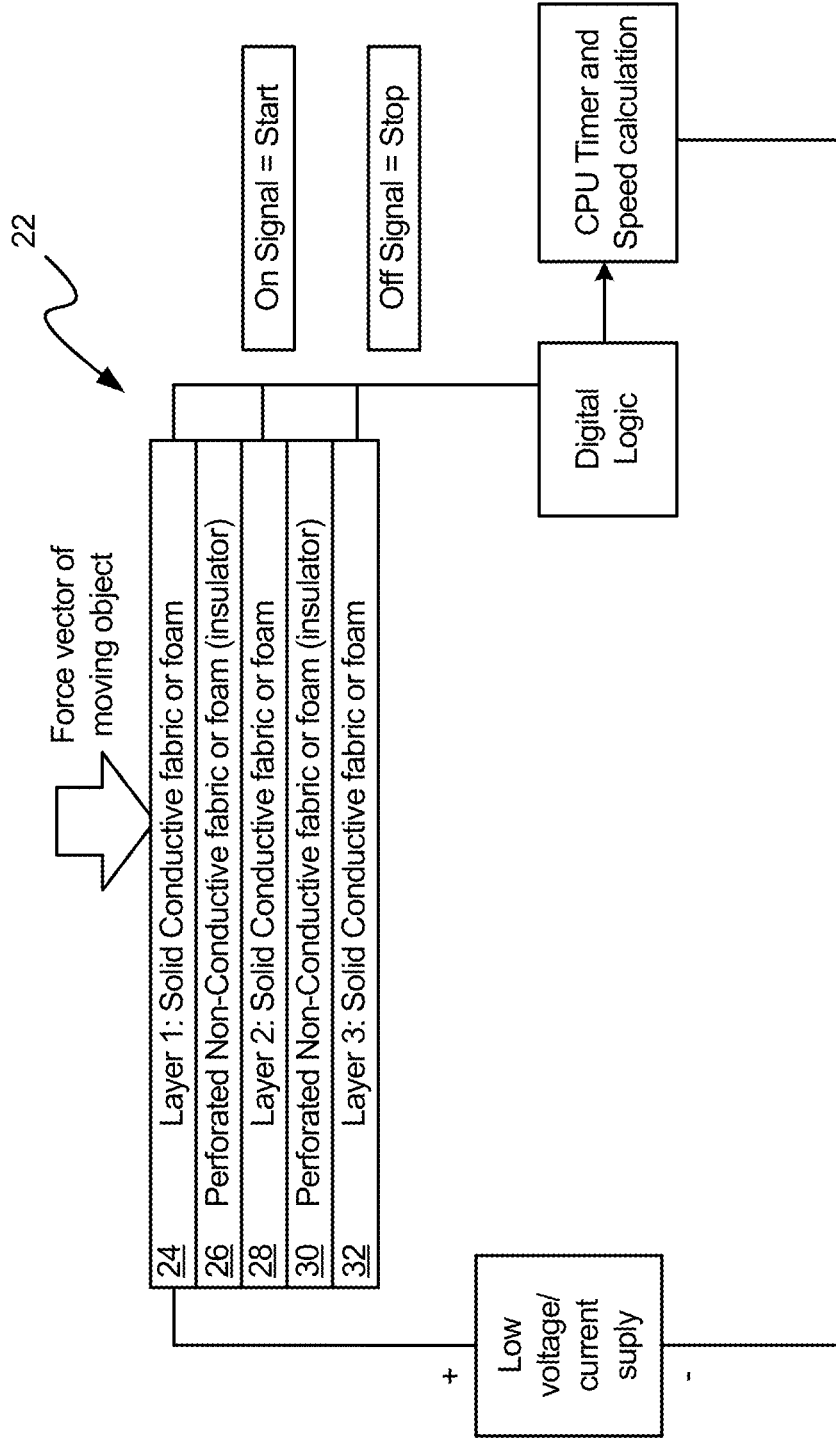


FIG. 4

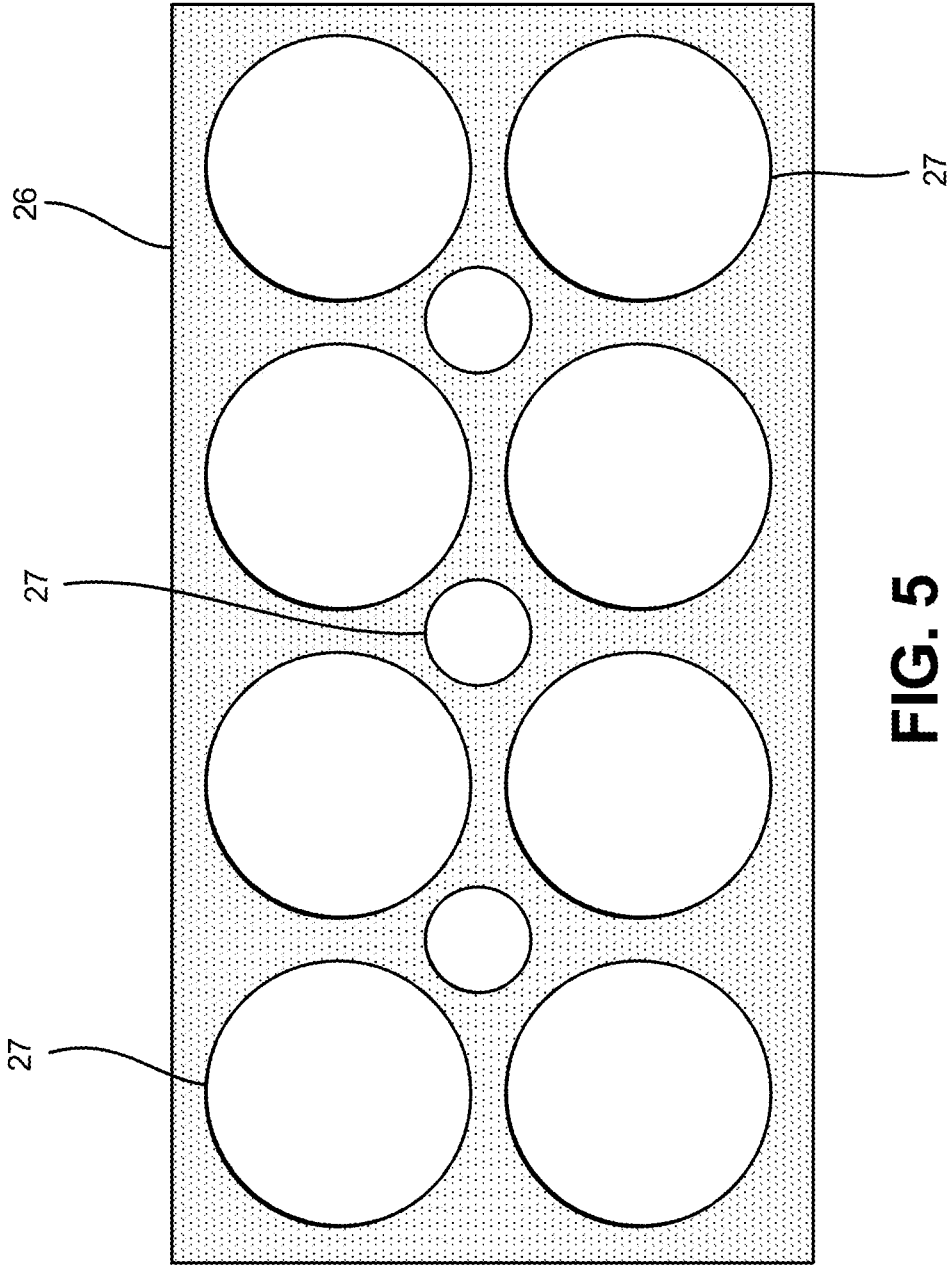


FIG. 5

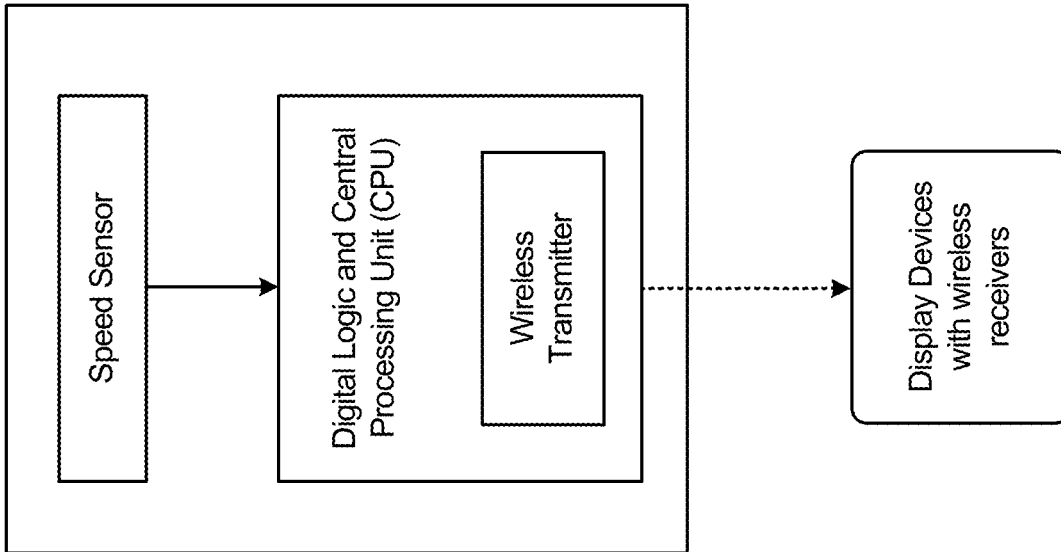


FIG. 6

Thickness (in*)	Low Density	High Density	Cross Linked
1/4	12200	12250	12660
3/8		12350	
1/2	12400	12450	
3/4		12550	
1	12600	12650	

FIG. 7

I/D	Requirement	Verification Description
1.	Technical	
1.1	The design of this system shall be "production ready". This design shall NOT be a prototype.	Inspection of Final Design ready for production documents, i.e. drawings, bill of materials that reference material and component supplier's quotations of Requirement 1.1, software code, etc.
1.1	The Technical Performance Measure (TPM) of the display in miles per hour (mph) shall be rounded to the one miles per hour, i.e. 50.50 miles per hour shall be rounded to display 51 miles per hour. Likewise, 50.49 miles per hour shall be rounded to display 50 mph.	(1)Observation of display. (2)Display shows miles per hour value to the nearest one mile per hour.
1.2	The system shall measure and display the impact speed of a standard baseball dropped from 1 foot \pm 0.25 inches.	(1)The on signal start time and off signal stop time are measured by an oscilloscope. (2)The distance between layer 2 and layer 3 is measured by a scale of smallest resolution of 1/32 inch. (3)The time difference between start and stop divided by the distance between layer 2 and 3 shall equal the TPM value. (4) The TPM is observed on the display.
1.3	The system shall measure and display the impact speed of a standard baseball dropped from 5 feet \pm 1.25 inches.	(1)The on signal start time and off signal stop time are measured by an oscilloscope. (2)The time difference between start and stop divided by the distance between layer 2 and 3 shall equal the TPM value. (4)The TPM is observed on the display.

FIG. 8A

I/D	Requirement	Verification Description
1.	Technical	
1.4	The system shall measure and display the impact speed of a standard baseball dropped from 10 feet \pm 1.25 inches.	(1) The on signal start time and off signal stop time are measured by an oscilloscope. (2) The time difference between start and stop divided by the distance between layer 2 and 3 shall equal the TPM value. (4) The TPM is observed on the display.
1.5	The system shall measure the impact speed of a martial arts stick striking a round training bag.	

FIG. 8B

PRODUCT IDENTIFICATION

Product Trade Name: Statfree® Conductive Foam

Chemical Family: Polyolefin

Chemical Name: Polyethylene Foam

Other Names: LD Conductive (CN) or Static Dissipative (SD) Grades

CAS Name & Number: Polyethylene CAS 9002-88-4

Carbon Black CAS 1333-88-4

COMPOSITION

Crosslinked polyethylene: 90-93%

Carbon black: 7-10%

PHYSICAL DATA

Density: 0.92 g/cc (polymer)

Bulk Density (kg/m^3): Nominal densities vary from 30 Kg/m^3 to 50 Kg/m^3

FIG. 9

SPEED TRACKER

REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims the benefit of Provisional Application No. 62/395,887, filed Sep. 16, 2016, and the non-provisional application Ser. No. 15/706,276 filed Sep. 15, 2017, the contents of which are incorporated herein by reference.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates generally to a device for measuring, transmitting and displaying on a computer or mobile display device, the speed, force, rate and/or frequency of impact of an object hitting a target. In one preferred embodiment, the present invention is used to measure, transmit and display on a computer or cell phone, the speed, force, rate and/or frequency of impact of a person striking a self-defense training target.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

“Strike targets” are used in self-defense training. The targets absorb blows from various body parts of a self-defense training participant. These targets may be hand held or floor or wall mounted, they may be stationary or moving, they may look like the torso of a human body, a punching bag or some other shape.

These targets have advantages and disadvantages. A hand held target requires a second person to hold the target. The person holding the target is able to provide at least some limited feedback to the participant based on the sensory perceptions of the target holder, but such observations are usually imprecise. A stationary target does not require a second person to hold it, but offers no feedback to the participant.

One prior art device created by Applicant is illustrated in FIGS. 1 and 2. The device utilizes a non-contact sensors, such as a laser, for measuring and transmitting the speed of an object hitting a target. This measurement is wirelessly transmitted to a computer or cell phone for display. The prior art device has some shortcomings, as the laser must be pointed precisely where a trainer strikes a training bag. People have different shapes and heights and do not strike the bag in the same place or even consistently strike the bag in the same place. This results in poor measurements or no measurements at times. Further, the laser is focused on a particular location and the speed measured is only the speed of a body part at that instant, not necessarily the strike force on the bag.

Thus, there remains a need for a target that does not require an extra person to hold the device and which will give consistently accurate information to the self-defense training participant about the strike force, speed and rate.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is a device for measuring and displaying the speed, force and/or rate an object or a body part strikes a target. The present invention includes a sensor, computer, transmitter and a display.

The sensor of the present invention consists of a first, second, and third layer of conductive fabric separated by a layers of perforated, non-conductive fabric. A first perforated non-conductive layer is positioned between the first and second conductive layers and a second perforated non-

conductive layer is positioned between the second and third conductive layers. The distance between the conductive layers is known.

The conductive layers are in electrical communication with a computer or similar device for receiving data from the conductive material and analyzing the same.

When an object strikes the first conductive fabric layer, the first layer is pushed through the perforations or openings in the first non-conductive layer into contact with the second conductive layer. When the first conductive layer contacts the second conductive layer, a start signal is generated. As the force of the striking object continues, the first or second layer, or both, are forced through the perforations in the second non-conductive layer into contact with the third conductive layer. When the third layer is touched by the first or second layers, a stop signal is generated. Since the distance between the conductive layers is known, an algorithm is applied to divide the distance between the second and third conductive layers by the time between the start and stop signals to determine the speed of the striking object.

The display system of the present invention is typically the computer but can be some other device. The computer can be in direct electric communication with the conductive fabric or in wireless communication. The wireless system includes a communication device in electric communication with the conductive fabrics for receiving signals from the fabric. The communication device either interprets the signals from the conductive fabrics and wirelessly transmits the interpreted data to the computer for display or simply transmits the data obtained from the conductive fabrics to the computer for interpretation and display.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The accompanying drawings are included to provide a further understanding of embodiments and are incorporated in and constitute a part of this specification. The drawings illustrate embodiments and together with the description serve to explain principles of embodiments. Other embodiments and many of the intended advantages of embodiments will be readily appreciated as they become better understood by reference to the following detailed description. The elements of the drawings are not necessarily to scale relative to each other. Like reference numerals designate corresponding similar parts.

FIG. 1 is a flow diagram illustrating the general components and operation of the prior art;

FIG. 2 is a flow diagram illustrating the general operation of the prior art;

FIG. 3 is a flow diagram illustrating the general components and operation of one embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 4 illustrates the alternating layers of conductive and non-conductive material utilized in the present invention;

FIG. 5 illustrates a side view of the non-conductive fabric of the present invention;

FIG. 6 is a flow diagram illustrating how signals generated by striking an object are transmitted from a sensor to a CPU where the signals are algorithmically interpreted and the resulting data is wirelessly transmitted for display on a display device;

FIG. 7 is a table of specifications of preferred electrically conductive fabrics;

FIG. 8A is a table illustrating the design performance and characteristics of one preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 8B is a continuation of the table of FIG. 8A; and

FIG. 9 is a table showing characteristics of one preferred embodiment of a fabric utilized in the present invention,

APPLICANT'S PRIOR ART

Applicant developed a prior art device for measuring the speed of a kick against a training bag, as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2. This device includes the use of a strike target 1, two opposing laser transmitters/receivers 2, WIFI or other wireless connection 3 and a display device (computer 4 or phone 5).

Each laser device includes a transmitter/receiver in spaced relation that corresponds with a receiver/transmitter on the other laser as shown in FIG. 2. Each transmitter sends a signal to the receiver on the opposing laser, creating two spaced constant signals.

In operation, a trainee kicks target 1 between the lasers 2. As shown in FIG. 2, the kick in the direction of arrow 6 breaks the first signal, causing one of the lasers to send a first message to the microcomputer. As the kick progresses in the direction of arrow 6, the second signal is broken, causing one of the lasers to send a second message to the microcomputer. At the microcomputer, an algorithm is applied, based on the distance between the first and second laser signals and the time differential measured between the breaking of the first and second signals, to calculate the speed of the strike.

The prior art device has a number of disadvantages. The lasers are quite expensive and heavy and require constant adjustment and calibration since people of different sizes and shapes strike the target at different heights. (Each participant may strike the target at a different height throughout training as well.) This results in poor measurements or non-measurements of the strike. Additionally, the lasers, if struck by a trainee, can be damaged or cause harm to the trainee.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

In contrast to the prior art, the present invention 10 requires less equipment, dramatically reduces the weight and cost of the system, requires no calibration or adjustment, does not present any obstacles that could harm a trainee and improves the ease of moving the system.

Instead of the heavy, high maintenance and expensive lasers, the present invention utilizes a sensor attached to the target to measure speed, force and rate of a strike. In one preferred embodiment shown in FIG. 3, the present invention includes a sensor 12 attached to target 20. The sensor is in electrical (wireless) communication with a computer/wireless transmitter 14 which communicates with display 16 (desktop or laptop computer 16A or cell phone or other portable display device 16B) having a wireless receiver. The sensor can also be hard wired to the display.

Sensor 12 consists of layers of alternating conductive and non-conductive material or fabric as diagramed in FIG. 4. The layered fabric is attached to, wrapped around or forms the skin of the target 20. (As illustrated, the fabric covers a significant portion of the bag 1 so that people of all sizes are likely to strike the fabric portion of the bag on each hit or strike.)

Referring to FIG. 4, in one preferred embodiment, the layered fabric of sensor 12 includes a first conductive fabric, cloth or foam layer 24, a second conductive layer 28 and a third conductive layer 32. The first and second conductive layers are separated by a first non-conductive, perforated

layer 26 and the second and third conductive layers are separated by a second non-conductive perforated layer 30 (shown in side view in FIG. 5).

When the sensor is struck, the conductive layers make contact through the perforations in the nonconductive layers. This contact generates an electrical signal that is transmitted to the computer and serve as data points that are interpreted by the computer to derive information about the strike against the target.

In one embodiment, the first conductive layer has a reference signal always connected. When an object strikes the first conductive fabric layer, the first layer is pushed through the perforations or openings in the first non-conductive layer into contact with the second conductive layer. When the first conductive layer contacts the second conductive layer, a start signal is generated. The force of the striking object subsequently forces portions of the first or second layer, or both, through the perforations in the second non-conductive layer into contact with the third conductive layer. When the third layer is touched by the first or second conductive layers, a stop signal is generated.

The distance between the conductive layers is defined by the width of the non-conductive fabric. In one preferred embodiment, the non-conductive fabric is interchangeable to permit application of different widths of non-conductive fabric. The width of the non-conductive layer of fabric 26 can be pre-established to assist in the measurement of the time between contact with the first fabric layer and the second fabric layer.

Since the distance between the second and third conductive layers is known, an algorithm is applied to these signals/data, dividing the distance between the second and third conductive fabric layers by time (between the start and stop signals) to determine the speed, force and/or rate of the strike (and such additional information as can be derived using the fabric and computer of the present invention). This information is then transmitted to and displayed on a display device. Such impact information/statistics can be displayed in any desired units, i.e. miles per hours or kilometers per hour for speed.

Additional layers of alternating conductive and non-conducting fabric can be utilized with multiple data points (signals from the conductive fabric layers in response to the strike) to confirm or enhance the accuracy and completeness of the information obtained from the device.

One preferred fabric is Statfree® Conductive Foam identified by characteristics identified in FIG. 7 and below. However, the present invention is not limited to such characteristics or fabric.

Product Trade Name: Statfree® Conductive Foam

Chemical Family: Polyolefin

Chemical Name: Polyethylene Foam

Other Names: LD Conductive (CN) or Static Dissipative (SD) Grades

CAS Name & Number: Polyethylene CAS 9002-88-4; Carbon Black CAS 1333-88-4

Composition

Crosslinked polyethylene: 90-93%

Carbon black: 7-10%

Physical Data

Density: 0.92 g/cc (polymer)

Bulk Density (kg/m³): Nominal densities vary from 30 Kg/m³ to 50 Kg/m³

Some preferred functionality of the present invention is illustrated in FIGS. 8A and 8B, but again, such functionality is not limiting, only exemplary.

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Strike target **20** shown in the drawings is a training bag, but there is no limitation on the strike targets to which the fabric (sensor) can be attached. The impact sensor may be mounted to impact devices or structures such as a punching bag, football blocking sled to measure player speed of impact with the sled, baseball backstops to measure the speed of a pitch, a tennis practice wall to measure the speed of a serve or return, among other possibilities.

In one preferred embodiment, the sensor computer/transmitter is mounted away from the strike zone of the fabric to protect it from damage and the trainee from harm.

In one preferred embodiment, more than one display can be synchronized with the sensor to display the impact data in a desired form.

In one preferred embodiment, the measuring device automatically resets in preparation for the next strike after the fabric signals are sent.

In one preferred embodiment, impact or strike data can be organized and saved in the computer/transmitter or display device for future reference and the data for each trainee can be organized to provide desired reports to trainees, instructors, observers and record keepers.

In one preferred embodiment, the sensor sends raw signals to the display and the display interprets the data and displays the strike information.

Application of the technology of the present invention is not limited to sports. It is anticipated that the present invention is useful in any situation where it is desirable to know the speed, force, rate, frequency or other information regarding the impact of an object or body part against a target.

Even though numerous characteristics and advantages of the present invention have been set forth in the foregoing description, together with details of the structure and function of the invention, the disclosure is illustrative only, and changes may be made in detail, especially in matters of shape, size, and arrangement of parts within the principles of the invention to the full extent indicated by the broad general meaning of the terms in which the appended claims are expressed.

The invention claimed is:

1. An impact measuring device for measuring the impact of an object striking a target, including:

- a. a sensor for generating impact data mounted on a target, the sensor including at least a first, second and third layer of conductive fabric separated from each other by non-conductive layers of fabric having one or more openings in the fabric, the distance between the conductive layers being known;

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- b. a computer in electric communication with the conductive layers of fabric for receiving and analyzing impact data;

- c. a display device in communication with the computer for displaying analyzed impact data;

- d. whereupon the impact of an object striking the sensor causes the first conductive layer of fabric to contact the second conductive layer of fabric through an opening in the first non-conductive layer of fabric, transmitting a start signal to the computer, and subsequently the first or second conductive layer of fabric to contact the third conductive layer of fabric through an opening in the second non-conductive layer of fabric, transmitting a stop signal to the computer, an algorithm being applied to the start and stop times and known distance between the second and third conductive layers to obtain relevant information about the impact for display on the display device.

2. The impact measuring device of claim **1** wherein the algorithm derives one or more of the speed, force, rate and frequency of the impact.

3. The impact measuring device of claim **1** wherein the impact measuring device automatically resets in preparation for the next strike after the fabric signals are sent.

4. The impact measuring device of claim **1** wherein the non-conductive fabric is interchangeable to permit application of different widths of non-conductive fabric.

5. The impact measuring device of claim **1** wherein the display device is a cell phone.

6. The speed of impact measuring device of claim **1** wherein the display device is a personal computer.

7. The speed of impact measuring device of claim **1** wherein the sensor computer is mounted away from the strike zone of the fabric.

8. The speed of impact measuring device of claim **1** wherein more than one display can be synchronized with the sensor to display the impact data in a desired form.

9. The speed of impact measuring device of claim **1** wherein impact data can be organized and saved in the computer or display device for future reference.

10. The speed of impact measuring device of claim **1** wherein data for each trainee can be organized to provide desired reports.

11. The speed of impact measuring device of claim **1** wherein the fabric signals are transmitted to the display and the display interprets the data and displays the impact information.

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